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Letter dated 14 July 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit a letter dated 6 July 2016 from the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union Commission, Smaïl Chergui, on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (see annex), forwarding the communiqué on the situation in Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia adopted by the African Union Peace and Security Council at its 608th meeting, held in Addis Ababa on 29 June 2016.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

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Annex

6 July 2016

On behalf of the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, I would like to forward the communiqué on the situation in Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) adopted at the 608th meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council, held in Addis Ababa on 29 June 2016 (see enclosure).

On the basis of the recommendations of the report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Somalia and the revised concept of operations of AMISOM, the Peace and Security Council acknowledged the sustained progress made by AMISOM. It further welcomed the appointment of a new AMISOM Force Commander and expressed full support for his leadership in enhancing the Mission's operational effectiveness and strengthening its command and control.

In transmitting the communiqué of the Peace and Security Council, I would like to reiterate the commitment of the African Union to work closely with the United Nations and other international stakeholders towards bringing about durable peace, security and stability in Somalia.

The African Union looks forward to United Nations support for the implementation of this communique, and it would be appreciated if the document could be circulated as an official document of the United Nations Security Council.

(*Signed*) Smaïl **Chergui**
Ambassador
AU Commissioner for Peace and Security

Enclosure

Communiqué

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 608th meeting, held on 29 June 2016, adopted the following decision on the situation in Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM):

The Council,

1. **Takes note** of the briefing provided by the acting Director for Peace and Security on behalf of the Commissioner for Peace and Security on the situation in Somalia. The Council also takes note of the statements made by the representatives of Somalia, Ethiopia, in its capacity as Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the European Union and the United Nations;

2. **Condemns in the strongest possible terms** the continuing attacks carried out by the Al Shaabab terrorist group, including the recent attack on the Naso Hablod Hotel, in the busy KM-4 junction in southern Mogadishu, which resulted in at least 15 deaths, including that of Buri Mohamed Hamza, Somalia's State Minister for Environment, and left several civilians injured. The Council expresses its deepest condolences and solidarity with the people of Somalia, especially the families affected in the recent and other attacks by the terrorist group. The Council also expresses its deep concern over the continued threat that Al Shabaab poses to peace and stability in Somalia and the region;

3. **Welcomes** the progress made by the Federal Government of Somalia, with the support of AMISOM, in the establishment of permanent democratic institutions through inclusive political processes, including the progress made in State formation, constitution-making and electoral processes. In this respect, the Council urges the Federal Government of Somalia to remain committed and more deliberate in its efforts to achieve its political milestones, as reflected in Vision 2016, especially in the successful conduct of elections scheduled for August/September 2016;

4. **Stresses** the need to adhere to this electoral timeline and to ensure a transparent, inclusive and credible electoral process, as well as the need for a common understanding and resolution of the current challenges associated with the State formation process. The Council also calls for the cooperation of all the people of Somalia, particularly those in Hiraan and Middle Shabele, in order to enable the State formation process to move forward. The Council urges the people of Somalia to assume greater responsibility for the security and governance of their country;

5. **Emphasizes** the need to align the current political developments in Somalia with efforts to develop capable, inclusive and effective Somalia National Security Forces, in line with the security strategy outlined in the revised concept of operations. Accordingly, the Council reiterates the need for the international community to promote greater coordination and cooperation through the African Union in the collective efforts to achieve a more deliberate and effective approach in building the capacity of the Somalia National Security Forces. In this regard, the Council urges the United Nations Security Council to lift the arms embargo imposed on Somalia, as contained in Security Council resolution 2244 (2015), as a critical aspect of building capable Somalian security institutions;

6. **Commends** the efforts of the AU Commission for having convened the workshop that revised the AMISOM concept of operations, in line with the communiqué (PSC/PR/COMM.2(DXCV)) of its 595th meeting, held on 28 April 2015. In this respect, the Council takes note of the meeting of the Military Operations Coordination Committee, which was held in Kampala on 22 June 2016, that deliberated and endorsed the main recommendations of the revised concept of operations;

7. **Expresses satisfaction** with the outcome of the revised concept of operations in relation to the identified priority tasks, namely: the support and contribution of AMISOM to securing the electoral process in Somalia in coordination with the Elections Security Taskforce within the Mission area; more targeted and effective offensive operations by AMISOM and the Somalia National Security Forces against Al Shaabab; implementation of the established Joint Technical Intelligence Committees in order to improve intelligence-sharing and management; and enhanced command and control by urgently filling structures of the strategic, operational and tactical headquarters of AMISOM with dedicated and qualified personnel;

8. **Welcomes** the appointment of General Osman Nour Soubagleh by the Chairperson of the AU Commission as the new AMISOM Force Commander on 31 May 2016, and his participation in the revision of the concept of operations, as well as in the meeting of the Military Operations Coordination Committee. The Council further expresses satisfaction with this appointment as part of efforts to enhance AMISOM offensive operations and to promote increased command and control in the conduct of AMISOM operations, in line with the decision of the Djibouti Summit and other relevant decisions. The Council expresses full support to the new Force Commander and calls upon him to spare no effort in promoting greater efficiency and coordination of AMISOM operations;

9. **Endorses** the revised concept of operations, which reflects efforts towards enhancing the operations of AMISOM and the Somalia National Security Forces and crucially identifies indicative timelines for an exit strategy of AMISOM from Somalia. Accordingly, the Council requests the AU Commission to formally transmit the endorsed concept of operations to the troop- and police-contributing countries and the United Nations Security Council for their consideration. The Council further directs the Commission and AMISOM, and requests the United Nations and relevant stakeholders, to work in close collaboration to ensure effective implementation of the revised concept of operations;

10. **Takes note** of the indicative timelines of the AMISOM exit strategy presented by the AU Commission, which prioritizes territorial recovery and consolidation by AMISOM and the Somalia National Security Forces until October 2018 and a subsequent drawdown and transfer of security responsibilities to the Somalia National Security Forces from 2018 to December 2020. The Council further urges all troop- and police-contributing countries to work in a collective, concerted and coordinated manner within the indicative time frame;

11. **Expresses appreciation** to the United Nations for its support to AMISOM, and stresses the need for continued efforts to enhance that support through the utilization of the United Nations assessed contribution, bearing in mind that, in deploying a mission in Somalia, the African Union is acting on behalf of the United Nations Security Council, which has the primary responsibility for the

maintenance of international peace and security, and aims at creating conditions conducive to the long-term stabilization and reconstruction of Somalia;

12. **Reiterates its call** for the deployment of additional force enablers, especially the pledged air assets by Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. In this regard, the Council notes with concern the prolonged negotiations between the United Nations and troop- and police-contributing countries in the finalization of the letters of assist that will facilitate the deployment of these air assets. Accordingly, the Council reiterates its call for the urgent finalization of the negotiations on the letters of assist, without further delay, taking into account that reimbursement rates for these assets should be commensurate with the context of AMISOM asymmetrical operations;

13. **Renews** the appreciation of the African Union to the European Union and its member States for their support to AMISOM as well as other contributions made towards the overall peace, security and stability of Somalia. The Council welcomes the continued support of the European Union to AMISOM under the Africa Peace Facility, based on the strategic partnership between Africa and the European Union and in the mutual interest of both continents, to ensure peace and security in Somalia. In this respect, the Council takes note of the European Union's decision to accelerate the payment of the AMISOM troop allowance through a lump-sum approach, and looks forward to the timely implementation of this disbursement model within the shortest time frame. The Council also calls for the fulfilment of the pledge of funds for Somalia, especially in this critical period of elections in the country;

14. **Further expresses deep concern** about the recent decision by the European Union to alter the payment procedures for the Burundian National Defence Force contingent within AMISOM, bearing in mind the critical phase of AMISOM operations, especially in the light of the upcoming elections in Somalia. Accordingly, the Council urges the European Union to reverse or at least delay the implementation of this decision in order to avoid possible adverse effects that could undermine the operational momentum of AMISOM;

15. **Pays tribute** to all AMISOM uniformed and civilian personnel as well as the troop- and police-contributing countries, namely, Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda, for their continued commitment and the sacrifices made thus far;

16. **Requests** the AU Commission to report back to the Council on the implementation of the revised concept of operations not later than 90 days from the date of the adoption of this communiqué;

17. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.